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Scripting History: Creating an Introductory Videotape Presentation for Visitors to an Historic House Museum: Cliveden

Philip Michael Nord
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SCRIPTING HISTORY: CREATING AN INTRODUCTORY VIDEOTAPE
PRESENTATION FOR VISITORS TO AN HISTORIC HOUSE MUSEUM --
CLIVEDEN

Philip Michael Nord

A THESIS

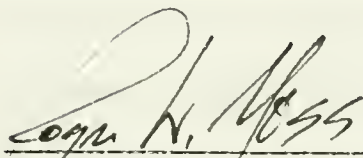
in

Historic Preservation


Presented to the Faculties of the University of Pennsylvania in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

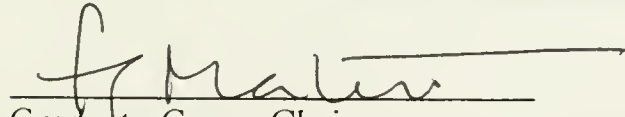
2000



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I would like to acknowledge and offer my appreciation to those who have generously given me the opportunity to explore the life and times of Cliveden and the Chew family mansion in the Germantown section of Philadelphia.

Special thanks must be given to Dr. Roger W. Moss for his continued guidance, encouragement and belief in my ability to accomplish this project. To Elizabeth Laurent, formerly Curator of Cliveden, for her enthusiasm. Without her incredible knowledge, insight and patience, this project would never have been completed. To the entire staff at Cliveden my thanks, especially to Diane Foster, John Dean, and Mary Jeanne Siegert, whose comments provided me with a wealth of inside information giving the script a focus and direction. I would like to dedicate this project to my wife, Nancy, who after nearly thirty years is still my best friend.

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Preface

In 1974 I secured my first professional position as a filmmaker working for a small advertising agency in the State of Maine. I had just finished a four year stint in the U.S. Air Force, an undergraduate degree in archaeology, and a year at Brooks Institute of Photography in Santa Barbara, California, studying motion picture production. I thought I was on my way to becoming the future Ken Burns. After a year of making documentary films, I realized that filmmaking could be an effective tool in communicating the importance of history as well as helping the general public to understand complex scientific data.¹ There appeared to be a lack of quality films designed to interpret and explain scholarly research, and it was my goal to develop a speciality in the genre. I entered the Temple University graduate communications (radio, television and film) program to further my education and expertise in this area. Unfortunately, several delightful and engaging events (children, corporate employment and my own business) over the next 20 years required my full attention and would delay my cinematic career -- monetary desires outweighing the creative impulses.

During this time my interest in history, architecture, and film remained. The cross roads and opportunity presented itself with family matters under control and an inspiration to return and complete my graduate education in -- historic preservation communications.

What I found upon entering the Historic Preservation Program at the University of Pennsylvania, was the same reluctance in the scholarly community to use films as a teaching and promotional instrument.² While the business community and even government agencies make extensive use of the media, many historians and scholars still shun the use of cinematic aids.³ These academics cite Hollywood entertainment features -- such as *Indiana Jones and the Search for the Holy Grail* -- as unrealistic visions of archaeology (in this case) that popularize treasure hunting as mere mythic adventures and diminish their diligent efforts at true scientific research.⁴ While this to a degree may be true, I believe that the influence of these theatrical films has inspired many young people to take up serious studies of our past, and done so more effectively than many of the tomes written by historians and/or university scholars.⁵ The inability of some academicians to write about their findings in a language the average individual can comprehend is at the heart of the problem. While their colleagues may be able to understand academic palaver, most people find such efforts uninspiring, if not downright boring.⁶ The results is that valuable research and knowledge will end up on a dusty shelf in the far corners of some obscure library.

I believe the historic preservation community in the United States has fallen into this academic maze and needs to find its way out. Some Americans are not predisposed to preservation efforts because they fear losing their property rights -- by takings, easements, and governmental

dictates -- that appear to restrict freedom and individual rights.⁷ The result of this misunderstanding has, in part, limited the success of preservation efforts to save a number of historic sites from uncontrolled development and significantly valuable structures from demolition and permanent losses to our historical record. The need to carry the preservation message in an easy to understand, lucid and entertaining fashion is clearly evident and long overdue. The new technology of videotape, a less expensive alternative to film, is available and the opportunity to publicize, promote and popularize preservation is now. As a preservationist and a filmmaker, I believe the potential marketability of films and/or videos specializing in preservation that are accurate, entertaining and inspiring, could be enormous.

Although this thesis will not manifest itself in the actual production of a film, it will result in a script that will hopefully come to fruition in the near future.

Notes on the Preface

1. One of the films I made (circa 1972) dealt with: instrumental neutron activation analysis as an obsidian location technique -- I called it *Reflections from Antiquity*.
2. During my two years in the program there were no films or videos shown during class.
3. Barry Hampe, *Making Videos for Money* (New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1998) p. 7. Companies use videos for sales, public relations, and training. Government agencies regularly make videos to explain what they are doing. And nonprofit organizations are turning to information videos as a way to carry their message -- and their fund raising appeals -- to a larger audience.
4. One of a series of adventures featuring Harrison Ford as an archaeologist searching for the Arc of the Covenant with Nazi spies chasing him around the world.
5. John H. Jameson, Jr., *Presenting Archaeology to the Public* (Walnut Creek, California: Altamira Press, 1997) p. 82. Harrison Ford's title character, "Indiana Jones", as an exotic archaeologist in a series of movies has indeed raised public consciousness about archaeology -- yet the image strays considerably from reality.
6. Try reading Richard Blanton's 1994 *Houses and Households: A comparative study*. I found myself looking up words in the dictionary that did not exist -- words made-up by the author(s).
7. William Murtagh, *Keeping Time, Revised ed.* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1997) pp. 216-219. "Taking" is the power of government to expropriate private property. An "Easement" is a partial interest in real property, through donation or purchase, recorded in the deed, protecting the identifying elements of the interior/exterior or space around the property deemed important to be preserved.

Introduction

Two years of concentrated study in historic preservation working towards a master's degree has convinced me that there is a desperate need for additional communication entries in this field. My research has uncovered only a few preservation-specific films to promote and preserve the unique architectural structures we refer to as historic house museums.¹ I have previewed several introductory films made for and used by house museums and found them generally inaccurate, dated, and in some cases dull, boring and expensive attempts by professional filmmakers who do not fully understand the issues or appreciate the principles and goals of the preservation community. Some of these films, in my opinion, have resulted in stilted messages that present mythical stories that can no longer be accepted as historical fact.²

There are many challenges in making a "superior" film with "accurate" history that is interesting and enjoyable as well as educational and inspiring. An underlying question must be: Can someone with a film background and training in historic preservation make a better film than someone without both qualifications? My answer is yes. This is not necessarily based on technical media expertise, nor is it based on a careful exploration of historical research data. I believe a superior film will result from the combination and/or synthesis of these two abilities and, most important, a creative and insightful interpretation of the story. This relationship might be described as an innate sensitivity to the historic fabric

itself. To help convince the reader, I have included my version of a script written for Cliveden, an historic house museum, as an example. Essentially, there is no “one way” to script and make a film. Every project requires the filmmaker to make a number of decisions based on several critical issues, other than story selection, such as: the composition of the audience, purpose of the film, length, and, ultimately, the limitations of budget. A number of these factors will be explored and evaluated in the following pages of this paper.

Several motivations inspired me to undertake this project. First, as a documentary filmmaker, my desire was to specialize in historic preservation communications (primarily in film production) and explore what, if anything, was being done in this area. Second, I have taken a special interest in historic house museums and I wanted to confirm my thesis: could a short introductory video be used effectively to promote a site, increase the visitor’s knowledge and enhance the tour experience. Third, I sensed, during my two years of graduate study, a reluctance on the part of the academic community to use the motion picture medium; and I wanted to find out why. Finally, my goal was to make a video on a house museum as an example of what can be done. I reasoned that a filmmaker who has knowledge of preservation issues can produce a superior product. Unfortunately, the University of Pennsylvania would not allow a film to be used as partial fulfillment for the Master of Science degree in Historic Preservation. Agreement was reached that I could write a script.

The first problem I encountered during the conception of “Scripting History” was the selection of a site to use as a case study.³ After several false starts, I finally selected Cliveden, a National Historic Landmark property owned by the National Trust, located in the Germantown section of Philadelphia. The next obstacle was deciding what material I should include in the video and what could be left out. This was primarily due to the recent and ongoing reinterpretation being undertaken at Cliveden which has uncovered a rich trove of new information.

How do I develop a script for visitors of all ages, considering their special interests, a varied range of educational levels and ethnic backgrounds? Fortunately, I was assisted by the curator and several members of the Cliveden staff who I interviewed to get a grasp on the stories being told. Numerous written publications were also available which gave me an opportunity to scan the current and previous research on Cliveden and the Chew family by others.

In order to create an effective and compelling visual document, the writer and/or filmmaker must mentally imagine the past events in the life and times of the characters being portrayed. This always presents a problem because no one really knows what it was like to live in Colonial America. The personal life experience of the script’s author has a tendency to manifest the story in either modern language or traditions that may not have existed during the life of the original characters. The video will be accurate only to the extent the filmmaker (and in most cases the director

and actors, who are also involved in the interpretation process) can transcend their contemporary mind set. On the other hand, if the filmmaker and the others involved in the production process can present the story in a modern way it may provide the audience with a better understanding of the story or in the case of an historic venue, what it was like to have lived during that time in the past. A recent film featuring Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* using the same archaic language, but in a modern setting, has evidently "communicated" this tragic epic successfully to a much larger audience -- according to my 18 year old daughter and some of her friends. I perceive the key issue in this case to be "relevance". Perhaps the same can happen with a preservation film -- resulting in an increased awareness that will emotionally connect with the audience and inspire them to help save their historic heritage.

In the following pages I will explore how and why video should be used. I will also explain some of the reasons that may account for not having (and not using) videotape and why I believe that historic house museums and the preservation community at large are missing a great promotional opportunity.⁴ I will also argue that the problems associated with video production and exhibition are not insurmountable. They can be rectified and remedied by having the productions written, filmed, and edited by a filmmaker trained in historic preservation. At the end of this brief examination, I will offer my filmmaker's version of a preservationist's video script. It is my intention to use this script to film.

edit, and complete the production and use it as a promotional tool for making additional preservation related films and to ultimately help the public understand the importance of preservation.

Notes on the Introduction

1. The vast majority of video titles I found -- that might be considered preservation related -- can best be described as generic in nature and only tangential to preservation. The few films I found listed by the American Association for State and Local History, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the American Association of Museums and Routledge (who specialize in Anthropology and Archaeology publications) are more centered on how to manage, care for, and interpret museum facilities, exhibits, artifacts and visitors.

2. Stories of German born privateers employed by the British to raid the French and Spanish shipping lines as espoused by administrators of some historic house museums (The Peter Wentz Farmstead) based on "tradition" and oral history (two hundred years later) have no basis in fact. The Moland House video, sponsored by the Millbrook Society (an amateur archaeology group) contends that they found the foundations for the slave quarters -- a popular topic for fund raising. Their evidence consisted of a broken piece of imported glass found in the ruins of an outbuilding foundation -- they surmised it was kept by a slave for its beauty!

3. My first choice for a film project was Fiske Kimball and his efforts to preserve the Fairmont Park houses. After several meetings with Park officials, who originally embraced my idea, I was told that a "professional" film company was already in the process of making such a documentary and I would be duplicating their efforts. I also was contacted by the Philadelphia city film coordinator and informed that special authorization, along with permits and fees would be required before I could begin filming and an associate would be on hand to oversee the production. Needless to say, my enthusiasm for the project was diminished. My second choice was Stenton, the Logan mansion in Germantown, another Colonial era masterpiece featuring outstanding architecture and stories of times past. After multiple site visits, research, and meetings with the director I began to develop the story. I selected a fascinating character to be the narrator -- an old slave woman who tradition says saved Stenton from being burned by the British during the American Revolution. When the National Society of Colonial Dames in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, who oversee the site and are the board of directors, got wind of my intention -- they would have nothing to do with that interpretation and stopped my plans.

4. James Marston Fitch, *Historic Preservation* (London: University Press of Virginia, 1995) p. 348. Perhaps the most powerful technological teaching aid is the documentary film. Although it has not been very widely used in America in connection with historic sites, the documentary obviously affords the opportunity to recreate historic events in a fashion other wise unattainable. Beyond question, one of the best of all ways to interpret the historic building is to recreate the activities and processes which it was originally designed to facilitate or expedite.

Chapter One

Selecting Cliveden as a case study

The poetry of history lies in the quasi-miraculous fact that once, on this earth, on this familiar spot of ground, walked other men and women, as actual as we are today, thinking their own thoughts, swayed by their own passions, but now all gone, one generation vanishing after another, gone as utterly as we ourselves shall shortly be gone like ghosts at cock-crow.

G.M. Trevelyan, *Autobiography of an historian*¹

Cliveden is located at 6401 Germantown Avenue in the Germantown section of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, approximately six miles from the center of the city. The property is situated on six acres of fenced gardens and mature trees adjacent to the “great road” which Germantown Avenue was called during the Colonial period.² Cliveden appears rather incongruous to the surrounding blight of urban decay that has enveloped this neighborhood over the last 75 years. But regardless of its run down condition Germantown is a microcosm of historic American fabric. Many houses of historic character line both sides of the avenue and provide a fascinating opportunity to view the remarkable changes that have occurred during its 300 years of existence. It was originally settled by German immigrants who purchased land from William Penn in the late 17th century.³ Today, Cliveden remains a stalwart example of colonial American determination and is the leading representative of significant historic house museums in the area.

In 1972 ownership of Cliveden was transferred by the Chew Family to the National Trust for Historic Preservation as one of only 19 specially selected examples of significant historic properties in the United States.⁴ Cliveden is administered by a professional staff and a number of dedicated and well-trained volunteers who share their knowledge and enthusiasm for this National Historic Landmark (designated 1961) with the public.⁵

Key to the unique quality of Cliveden are the Chew family records which number over 200,000 documents which have provided researchers with a chronological sequence in the life of an American family at Cliveden.⁶ This has made it possible to trace the development of the house and those who lived there with far more accuracy than many other historic sites. Dedicated members of the Chew Family also recognized the importance of Cliveden and the role of the family in preserving the site and saved many of the original family artifacts that have representational value. A number of family members, during the years of their occupancy, actively promoted their own interpretations which helped to insure the survival of this middle Georgian architectural gem.

Conversion to public historic house museums has saved many significant structures representing various time periods and lifestyles. Typically, they have told a story of the rich and famous. While these vignettes of history have some beneficial elements for some visitors, others have had difficulty in understanding and appreciating their connections to

an elite American story. Today many of these traditional interpretations are being challenged. These questions range from the story being told to matters relating to previous restoration efforts such as color use, and even the arrangement of furniture.

In recent years museum administrators began looking for answers and called in professionals from various fields to begin the process of reevaluating their physical properties and documentation. The “old stories” began to change with new research provided by a new breed of scientists, preservationists and conservators. Conservators have developed many sophisticated techniques for maintaining the integrity of structural components such as wood and brick and helping prevent the disintegration of precious textiles such as period clothing, bedding and curtain material. Modern technology has provided refined scientific techniques for analyzing paint which has resulted in the reintroduction of original room colors and the reproduction of mural and wallpaper designs. Archival research has made the search for documentary evidence such as government records and early photographs much easier. Archaeological excavation has literally unearthed remnants of what the former residents ate and drank for dinner. X-ray technology has been able to provide details on the changes to building structure by revealing hidden details within the walls. This information, along with an examination of previously written and new research data, has shed new light on the “facts” and prompted a reinterpretation of the story. Cliveden has willingly undertaken this process

and as a result has a more intriguing, fascinating and complete story of its past. These new discoveries have led to a much broader interpretation that include not only those people who lived there but those who worked there too. This offers a much richer experience to visitors from diverse backgrounds.

Overview of Cliveden

Construction began on Cliveden 235 years ago (circa 1763-1767) as a summer house for Benjamin Chew, a significant and prosperous figure in colonial America before and after the American Revolution.⁷ He built a magnificent country house which fate placed in the middle of a Revolutionary War battle. This unfortunate event may ultimately have been one of the contributing factors to its survival. Another reason for its longevity is due to the care it received from the Chew family who occupied the building and called it home for seven generations.

Cliveden's story is about family -- the fascinating and enduring stories of the people who lived there through the centuries. The story is not frozen in a particular time. Cliveden was created and nurtured by a dedicated family and it grew and prospered along with its inhabitants. It matured and at times suffered from the ravages of man and nature; but it was always returned to good repair by a member of the family.

The story of Cliveden is more than a brilliant man, a great battle and fine architecture. Cliveden represents the American experience. It

documents generation after generation of triumphs and tragedy and the hopes and fears that touch nearly all families. It is a genealogical record of the past. The cast of characters who lived, worked, visited and died here is varied and diverse. Among the more colorful family members beside the patriarch, Chief Justice Benjamin Chew, were Anne, Bad Ben (Benjamin Chew II), Centennial Sam (Samuel Chew III), and the lady spinster, Aunt Bessie (Elizabeth Brown Chew). Some of those who worked on the estate were German artisans, African slaves, an Indian cook (from India), and a French tutor. Special guests included General George Washington, the Marquis de Lafayette and thousands of British and Colonial American soldiers who met there in mortal combat. The elite of Philadelphia society also came here along with presidents, foreign dignitaries, and other great personages of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.⁸

Visitors come from all over the world to see Cliveden. They have arrived from England, Canada, France, Spain, Asia and all across America to explore the confines and passageways of the mansion and also to ask questions. They want to know what makes this place special? How did the the Chew Family make their fortune? They ask provocative questions such as: Where did the slaves live and how were they treated? And why didn't the British General Howe, pursue General Washington's army after the Battle of Germantown and win the war? Some visitors have special interests and come to research the unique architecture, fine imported china or extensive clothing collections. American military historians want to

experience the sights and sounds of a recreated battle and look at the damage (still visible in the walls) from General Henry Knox's American artillery. Many come to gaze upon some of the finest examples of period furniture in the country.⁹

Cliveden, despite its relatively isolated location from other major tourist sites such as Independence Hall, sees thousands of visitors and school children each year. A converted carriage house and an extensive landscape provide visitor facilities and a place for community gatherings. The annual Battle of Germantown brings scores of reenactors and visitors to experience living history. A gift shop provides written materials for children making reports as well as souvenirs for the tourist. Special educational programs and seminars are provided by noted professional historians. Cliveden has also been successful in its efforts to reach out to the community by sharing its facilities with local neighborhood groups.

Notes on Chapter One

1. David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1985) p. 185.
2. Richard J. Webster, *Philadelphia Preserved: Catalog of the Historic American Buildings Survey* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976) p. 245.
3. Russell Weigley, ed., *Philadelphia: A 300 Year History* (New York: Norton, 1982) p.25.
4. Susan Reyburn and Paul Vitali, eds., *Cliveden* (Washington D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1997) p. 39.
5. Webster 1976, p. 263.
6. Nancy E. Richards, Chief Researcher, *Cliveden -- The Chew Mansion in Germantown. (A Report designed to chart the Social History of Cliveden as a companion to the HSR -- dated November 1993)* Xeroxed copy purchased at Cliveden, 1999. p. 177.
7. Roger W. Moss, *Historic Houses of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998) p. 116.
8. Richards 1993, pp. noted. George Washington visited the estate on August 19, 1787 (p. 24), Marquis de Lafayette was given a reception on July 20, 1825 (p. 34), and President William Howard Taft visited in 1912, on the 135th anniversary of the Battle of Germantown (p. 107).
9. Cliveden interview November 1999 meeting with Elizabeth Laurent. Curator, Diane Foster, John Dean, and Mary Jeanne Siegert, senior docents.

Chapter Two

Why make another video on Cliveden?

The past is everywhere. All around us lie features which, like ourselves and our thoughts, have more or less recognizable antecedents. Relics, histories, memories suffuse human experience. Each particular trace of the past ultimately perishes, but collectively they are immortal. Whether it is celebrated or rejected, attended to or ignored, the past is omnipresent.

David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country*¹

Two previous videotapes have been made at Cliveden. One in 1988, a 10 minute theatrical version called: *A House in the Country*.² The second was made in 1996, a 12 minute preservation oriented film entitled: *A Sense of Place*.³ Both productions are inadequate and in my opinion, do not provide the visitor with sufficient information to represent the unique features and historic benefits of the site. The 1988 film concentrates on only a single period of time featuring its first owner/builder. The 1996 film is not site specific -- its focus is on preservation issues and only gives a brief portrait of Cliveden.

During the last few years a number of historic house museums have been in the process of reevaluating their site, overall mission and previous interpretations. Curators have reexamined their collections from different points of view and found new meaning in their display of artifacts. The new research has caused them to modify their thinking and in some cases make changes to their story. These changes were brought about by a

number of factors such as the dramatic increase in the number of historic house museums. According to Sherry Butcher-Youngmans in *Historic House Museums: a Practical Handbook for their Care, Preservation, and Management* , there are over 6,000 in the United States and growing each year.⁴ New information provided by scientific technology, important new research discoveries and social awareness have mandated upgrading and the revision of the “same old story” which has provided the visitor with new perspectives that may also have greater appeal to the typical visitor. Substantial changes in the diversity of the American population, due in large part to increases in immigration, has resulted in a larger percentage of ethnic neighborhoods whose residents may feel left out or intimidated by Euro-centric, affluent, male history.⁵ The need for outreach programs to the surrounding community, which may feel isolated or abandoned by the traditional and too often elitist museums, is encouraging historic sites to rethink their programs of interpretations.

Unfortunately, there are no statistics on how many site specific videotapes have been made for historic house museums nor did I locate any data to determine if they are used -- if they do exist. At the Peter Wentz Farmstead a video was compiled by copying their twenty year old slide show. The tour guide explained that the quality of the visuals were so poor that they discontinued its use. In Philadelphia at Carpenters’ Hall they had an expensive professional video made that was of excellent quality but because it was too long (about 18 minutes) and the people had to stand.

hardly anyone watched it from start to finish. It was put on the shelf and rarely used.

Orientation Videos for Historic House Museums

The orientation video for an historic house museum might be best defined as an introduction to the site designed to tantalize the visitor with what they are about to see and hear during their guided tour. The presentation will provide the viewer with only a “taste” of what to expect by using vignettes of people, places and things related to the history and events surrounding the structure. The video should be limited in scope, avoiding lengthy explanations and confusing technical language and details. If possible, it should present features such as demonstrations for using unfamiliar period tools that can not be easily explained or shown by the interpreters.⁶ This “drawing card” should be designed to promote the site and “sell” the visitor on the unique qualities that make this attraction special. Those who seek out and select historic house museums to visit are generally already interested and a stimulating, short video presentation will increase the visitor’s curiosity.

During my exploration of this project a host of questions arose relative to orientation films as a group: Are they necessary? Effective? Useful? Do they provide any real educational value?

Are orientation films necessary? The answer, in my opinion, is an unqualified, yes. In today’s market place, convincing the public by

advertising a product or service is extremely important if you expect to survive. The old saying, “A picture is worth a thousand words” is a critical piece of the promotional game. Even a non-profit organization can and will benefit by having a videotape introduction. Copies of the cassette can be circulated via sale or presentation to a much larger audience (via cable television stations) to entice the public to visit and to consider becoming a contributing member, as either a volunteer or a financial donor for help in the preservation and/or protection of the site.

Are orientation films effective? The jury may still be out on the effectiveness of the orientation film. I have found no statistical evidence to prove it one way or another. I have seen a number of films, some pleasing to the eye and others less than inspiring. The effectiveness probably has a lot to do with the receptiveness of the individual in combination the quality of the script and technical skills employed by the filmmaker. The overall effort in trying to communicate or deliver the message by the creator is the ultimate challenge. Human nature, being what it is, along with the diversity of culture, language, education and economic condition of the receiver will always limit a universally positive reaction.⁷

Are orientation films useful? Having viewed a number of orientation films, my personal experience has been generally positive. The presentation becomes a part of the overall experience when visiting an historic site. It sets the stage with background data, poses questions, initiates the newcomer with salient information and creates anticipation.⁸ The benefits of a

videotape presentation to the historic house museum are many and will be explored later in this report. But there can be drawbacks to the orientation film: outdated research, poorly conceived messages and any number of statements considered out of sync with the current and prevailing socially acceptable beliefs will result in early obsolescence.⁹

Do orientation films have educational value? Exposing the viewer to previously unknown information could be considered educational. Attempting to qualify its value to the individual is difficult to evaluate. Testing the receiver of new information has traditionally been the only way to determine if they have received the message. But there is no way to guarantee that the communication has been received -- and nobody wants to take a test. The value of this knowledge to the individual can only be determined by its eventual use which is virtually impossible to quantify. An orientation film made for historic house museums can, at the very least, create an awareness and help develop an appreciation for history. This may be translated in a number of ways: donations, volunteerism, taking care of their personal (historic) property, or becoming politically active, by joining their local historical society and helping to protect their neighborhood.

Formulating the story to be told

This function is part of the process called pre-production. The first and most important step in formulating the story is to research all the

available written materials. A thorough exploration of any related books should be scanned for information. Published and unpublished sources such as family journals, reports researched and written by graduate students as well as scholars, magazine and newspaper articles, and pamphlets offered at the site should be examined. A review of anything that has been printed will give the filmmaker a solid background or at least a broad introduction to the people and events surrounding the subject. This requires multiple field trips to local and college libraries, historical societies and other archival facilities. The historical site itself may, and at Cliveden does, have a good collection of reference materials. The bibliographic sections of contemporary published materials usually have listings for further study. A computer search of the files at libraries may be helpful in reducing the time needed to find these materials but not all facilities have this equipment. Large organizations such as the Historical Society of Pennsylvania that owns the Chew papers may not have everything cataloged resulting in a laborious process of sifting through a volumous selection of documents.

Original documents may need translating from an archaic or foreign language into English but are a great help in three ways: First, they will often provide new data -- previously unknown and unpublished. Second, they can give a real sense of the author's style, feelings and even personality that you may not get from reading some previously published summary which may offer opinions, interpretations based on flawed research, or embellished recollections of oral history from an ancestor.

Third, and especially important for the filmmaker, is the opportunity to make use of the original documents as a visual feature. Unfortunately, there are restrictions on the use of these paper materials, designed to protect them from handling damage and exposure to light limiting their use.

Multiple site visits prior to filming are required. It is necessary to “scout” the best vantage points to select visuals to be included in the film. Special arrangements may be required for scheduling people and equipment for repositioning furnishings, and gaining access to the buildings. If artifact handling is necessary, only the museum curator or a designated representative should be allowed to touch the artifacts. The filmmaker must be careful and not put himself in a situation of liability by creating irreparable damage.

Some Notes on Developing the Script

The final stage of development, before the script gets underway is writing a “treatment”. It is generally, but not always, a few brief pages that describes the production and story elements as the filmmaker envisions it. The treatment is often used as a sales “pitch” for the client to explain what the film will be like. After reading it, if something the client feels is important, is missing, it can be worked into the script. It is also used to save time and problems if the client suddenly decides he does not want the film made.

There are a number of technical decisions to make before starting to

write the actual script. The first consideration is to choose a format which is an approach to collecting the visuals. I prefer filming sequences in preselected locations that appear to make statements by their visual effects that can stand alone without voice or narration. Time constraints will limit this approach but it is the most effective way to tell the story. The creative process is accomplished in the editing of these sequences. I generally have an idea of what I am looking for before I start shooting.

In the *Cliveden Chronicles* I will use a quasi theatrical approach or recreation of the events that require a bit more organization and coordination since it involves other technicians and actors. This may require securing location permits, lighting equipment, costumes and sound recording equipment which can add considerable sums to the budget.

Sometimes it is advantageous to use a combination of visual formats to speed up, clarify or intensify the message. Using a variety of audio and visual information will help a long, potentially dull sequence. Ken Burns has done this with several of his docudramas such as his highly rated *Civil War* series where he effectively used archival as maps and still photographs with period music and narration.

I prefer to test the production before a variety of audiences to make sure the message is understandable. Films made for special interest groups and a professional adult audience would require appropriate revisions. Complex theories and scientific processes also need to be reduced in complexity for all to comprehend.

Selma Thomas and Ann Mintz remarked,

The production of a media program is analogous to a research project. Like any such project, it presumes a sequence of editorial decisions. Those decisions can be good or bad, well considered or shallowly conceived. The resulting images can be descriptive and expressive, or they can be banal and irrelevant. But like any research project, *the media program is only as good as the ideas on which it is based*, (italics mine) since they will guide all technical, aesthetic, and conceptual decisions.¹⁰

And finally, “Experts do not simply know more than novices, they approach a topic differently.”¹¹

Notes on Chapter Two

1. David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1985) p. xv.
2. *A House in the Country* 1988 video featuring professional actor Samuel Chew VI son of the last owner of Cliveden in costume with an ill fitting wig who appears and disappears in and around the house portraying Chief Justice Benjamin Chew (circa 1770).
3. *A Sense of Place* 1996 video featuring several historic locations in Philadelphia that have been or will be "saved" or revitalized through the efforts of the community and preservationists working together.
4. Sherry Butcher-Youngmans, *Historic House Museums* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) p. 3.
5. *Museums for a New Century* (Washington D.C.: American Association of Museums, 1984) p. 24. Twenty-five percent of the annual increase in population in this country is due to immigration. One million people immigrate to the United States each year. Forty percent are Hispanics; another 40 percent are Asians.
6. William T. Alderson and Shirley Payne Low, *Interpretation of Historic Sites, 2nd ed., Revised* (Walnut Creek, California: Altamira Press, 1996) p. 86. In the interpretation of historic sites, the audio-visual production...is a highly successful device for the interpretative orientation of the visitor as has been demonstrated at numerous National Park Service Visitors Centers. Motion picture films and video tapes can be used to interpret topics that are beyond the capabilities of tour guides, such as showing the techniques of crafting an item that only can be performed by a few specialists in the country.
7. Alderson and Low 1996, p. 89. Audiovisual interpretation can be enormously helpful to the historic site. In a television conditioned society, motion pictures, videotapes and tape slide shows are an accustomed means of learning, for people will watch, though they may not read.
8. Alderson and Low 1996, pp. 90-91. The orientation film can insure that virtually every visitor receives a very precise and uniform presentation of the facts and concepts either as the whole interpretation or as a portion of the whole...The interpreters are able to assume a common, basic knowledge of the site.
9. Alderson and Low 1996, p. 89. A motion picture is also an inflexible package when portions of it become outdated or outmoded.
10. Selma Thomas and Ann Mintz, *The Virtual and the Real: Media in the Museum* (Washington D.C.: American Association of Museums, 1998) pp. 4-5.
11. Thomas and Mintz 1998, p. 27.

Chapter Three

The Videotape Presentation as a Communications Tool

There are houses which have soul and spirit, inclined to joy or sorrow; there are places of dignity and grandeur. There are facades of brick and stone that hold images; there are little silent places where, in half-forgotten whispers in dusty corners, the stories of ages find voice.

Margaret Meade-Fetherstonhaugh, *Uppark and Its People*.¹

The sights and sounds of video-produced television are universally acknowledged as an effective communication device.² The impact is equally great on visitors to a historic site. Other potential beneficiaries of this medium are the tour guides who work there, the surrounding neighborhood, the site itself, the preservation movement, and, ultimately American culture. The introductory video can provide many specific benefits for the visitor:

- A general orientation film can provide a preview to what will be seen and what to expect and look for while on the tour.
- The film can take visitors to areas of the site that are normally restricted -- such as the basement, the third floors and/or garrets where the servants might have worked and slept.
- A film can be especially valuable to someone who is physically disabled and is unable to climb stairs or manipulate a wheel chair. Captions can also be inserted at the bottom of the screen for the hearing impaired and the audio track can be made to explain the story in detail to those who are visually challenged.
- By overdubbing the sound, the film can be translated into other languages for visitors from other non-English speaking countries.³

- By using computer manipulation it is possible to show the evolution of the architecture through time. Still photographs in an album are just not adequate for these purposes.

Film also allows us to introduce early modes of transportation, food preparation, craft demonstrations, communication and sanitary conditions through the ages. It can help the community develop an appreciation for family -- its connections with history and memories of past lives. It can help explain the importance and relevance of historic preservation and its motives for maintaining the material culture of America. It can introduce the latest research and the dynamics of reinterpretation as society changes over time.

A film can help tour guides to relate specific stories about the life and times, struggles and controversies represented at the site.⁴ It can introduce special interest tours in architecture, ceramics, furnishings, textiles, fine arts, and the like. A film could help the tour guides by pointing out important details that may be overlooked, such as exhibits of clothing and artifacts which are not on display.

Finally, a video can introduce rules and regulations concerning safety and security while visitors are on the site. A video could include an appeal for financial support, something that docents may feel uncomfortable doing. It could help promote related sites of similar interest in the surrounding area.

Unfortunately, there are some drawbacks and problems to making an introductory video for historic sites. The most obvious, is the

initial cost for the production. Many historic house museums operate on a limited budget -- the majority on less than \$50,000 per year and a professionally made film can be expensive.⁵ Estimates of a per minute cost are notoriously fictitious because every film is different and requirements for the production budget must be made individually. In 1970, Barry Hampe noted the cost for a low budget film averaged around \$400 a minute, to a high of \$4,000.⁶ These estimates were based on 16mm film production but even today sophisticated video productions that include exotic locations, famous actors, aerial photography, crews, permits and special effects, can be frightfully expensive.⁷

A good independent filmmaker can produce a first class "short" feature on a limited and agreed budget. Assuming the filmmaker has his own Hi-8 video camera, uses a volunteer crew and actors, writes his own script, and edits his own production -- the film could be produced for far less money. My budget for the *Seven Revolutions of Philadelphia* was completed for under \$2,000.⁸ This figure was based on purchasing video cassettes and reproductions, transportation, and a professional editor's time (I did not have the equipment) at \$300 per hour for four hours which included my own narration time which resulted in my greatest outlay of funds. I estimate The *Cliveden Chronicles* will cost between \$10,000 and \$15,000 if I stick to the script as it was written and do most of the work myself using amateur actors. This will be a significant savings from a "professional" production which could run in the neighborhood of \$75,000.

Beyond the initial cost of a site-specific video, change is inevitable; films may become obsolete due to a variety of reasons. Periodic reinterpretations of the site, for example, could require changes in the exhibits and prompt revisions. The film could be outdated by old cars, clothing and hair styles that could leave the audience laughing.

The useful life of an orientation film's content must be considered. The very nature of history is change and as new research uncovers more evidence for interpretive changes the stories will have to be modified. As previously mentioned the changes in social attitudes and even in clothing styles can change a film very fast. The filmmaker should be aware of this and avoid making a contemporary film, to maximize its years of usefulness. Preventing this problem is a challenge -- predicting these changes and being aware of cars, cloths, hairstyles, and even language may help.

According to Elizabeth Laurent, former curator of Cliveden:

The classic Williamsburg orientation tape *Story of a Patriot*, (circa 1957) is now of more interest for the humor of its starring Jack Lord as a colonial Virginian, than its efforts to tell an historical story. The impressionistic John Huston orientation video for INHP seems to be an

exception to this problem of looking dated, perhaps because it uses a lot of "smoke and mirror" rather than straight representational images.⁹

A video, especially a short introductory one, (ie. ten minutes or less) cannot be expected to answer all the questions and tell the entire story like a documentary film of 30 or 45 minutes. The best it can do is to literally

“hook” the visitors, making them eagerly anticipate about the tour to come.¹⁰ Hopefully, the film will initiate more questions enabling the docent to provide the answers. Ideally the film should present the visitor with an (1) overview of the site, (2) its location in time and place, and (3) the people, events, and the story that connects them, before the viewers begin their journey through the site.

An additional concern facing all photographic and electronic image reproduction is their life expectancy. Black and white photographs appear to have the best pattern of longevity given the optimum environmental conditions. Color photographs have been a great disappointment; they may last only several years before significant deterioration. Motion picture films are seriously in danger of disintegration and efforts are being made by organizations such as The American Film Institute to copy them at great expense. Color slides are subject to fading, color changes, mold and scratches that make them useless within a short period of time due to repeated projection and frequent handling. Videotape, much like audiotape, is subject to atmospheric deterioration and magnetic alteration as well. How long they will survive and remain serviceable has not been determined. Useful life expectancy of the video may be extended by safely storing a “Master Tape” in an environmentally friendly, secure container to protect it from chemical agents, dust, bugs, humidity and general mishandling. Multiple use and inadequate cleaning of the VCR playback heads can also cause damage to their audio and visual integrity.¹¹

The final test for the success of a video is the reaction it receives from the viewer. If the film elicits no response from the audience, it is considered a failure as a communication vehicle. The film must produce a reactive response, to motivate or stimulate the senses so the message will be delivered. As noted in the following section there are a number of outside influences that can alter the successful transmission.

Notes on Chapter Three

1. David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1985) p. 193.
2. James Walker and Douglas Ferguson, *The Broadcast Television Industry* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1998) p. 132. Watching television consumes more time than any other activity except for work and sleep...We must acknowledge the awesome power of television advertising to influence purchasing decisions.
3. Sherri Hope Culver, *The Television and Video Survival Guide* (New Jersey: Brown Dog Press, 1999) pp. 162-163.
4. William T. Alderson and Shirley Payne Low, *Interpretation of Historic Sites, 2nd ed., Revised* (Walnut Creek, California: Altamira Press, 1996) p. 91.
5. Sherry Butcher-Younghans, *Historic House Museums* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) p. 6.
6. Barry Hampe, *Making Documentary Films and Reality Videos* (New York: Henry Holt & Company, Inc., 1997) p. 185.
7. Culver 1999, p. 51. The latest cost estimate (circa 1999) comes from Sherri Hope Culver who notes that costs for producing a "Promotional" program (length ten to fifteen minutes) with a low end range of \$8,000 to \$20,000, a moderate \$30,000 to \$150,000 and a high end of \$175,000 or more.
8. This was a graduate special project in historic preservation for George E. Thomas, Ph.D., at the University of Pennsylvania in 1999.
9. Elizabeth Laurent, former Cliveden Curator -- letter dated March 24, 1999.
10. Alan Rosenthal, *Writing, Directing, and Producing Documentary Films and Videos* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, revised ed., 1996) p. 82. The opening of the film has to catch or "hook" the viewers interest.
11. Selma Thomas and Ann Mintz, *The Virtual and the Real: Media in the Museum* (Washington D.C.: American Association of Museums, 1998) p. 63.

Fundamentals of Presentation

Now that we have it -- what do we do with it?

After all is said and done, the single most important function remaining is to show the film to an audience, in this case to the historic site visitors. Regardless of the films superior quality or the story's message, the theater or place where the viewers see the production must be equally first rate. The ability of the motion picture to deliver the intended communication must be free of irritating distractions. Poor sound or picture quality from badly maintained projection equipment combined with interruptions will negate the overall effectiveness of the presentation and the importance of the message may be lost or distorted.

The problems are the same as with a bad experience at the movie theater. Misaligned seats obscuring the view, extraneous light flashing on the screen and people talking instead of listening contribute to the interference that retards good communication. Ideally, a special room should be made available with comfortable seating, good acoustics, and an entrance from the back of the room. Special show times should be established to prevent walk in traffic from disturbing the others in the audience. The overall presentation should be professional and staged as a preliminary event -- an important part of the visitor experience. A well planned presentation can be very effective in making the visitor feel comfortable and receptive to new information.

A short film with exciting visuals should even keep the small children quiet and hold their attention. The visuals ultimately tell the story. Properly employed even visitors who do not understand English, should be able to understand the story. Tag lines for the hearing impaired can be added to the tape and other languages can be dubbed on special copies if required. Staff personnel should be trained in the operation and maintenance of the projection equipment and be present at all times to take care of any problems that arise. The area must be clean and free of debris to prevent accidents in low light conditions. Strange odors should be investigated and eliminated, except, oddly enough, for popcorn, which to most people has a pleasant, and inviting "movie smell".

The film should be able to stand on its own merits and be promoted as a saleable item. Copies could be available for purchase in the gift shop. It could be offered to public and commercial television stations who may feature it or use it as a fill-in whenever needed. It could be used at the city visitors center(s) and placed in hotels to be used with closed circuit television for their guests. Local historical societies and other historic sites could have copies to help in a mutual promotion of the area. The film should be good enough to exhibit at professional seminars, conferences and conventions. The possibilities for using this film for promoting the site are endless. For a few dollars each the original video can be reproduced in multiple copies and distributed all across the country and even to other countries that could help promote tourism.

A Special Note on Presentation

This short section on Presentation could have been placed in the Appendices of this report. As a filmmaker, I felt it was necessary to include it here because it is a critical component to the success of the video's ability to communicate. Given the choice, would a visitor to Cliveden be more inclined to sit down and read a written introduction to the site or watch an exciting and informative video?

Chapter Four

The Treatment

The following statements are designed to list the “possibilities” for a short film. Decisions must be made concerning the direction of the film as influenced by the client, the filmmaker, and time limitations. My special interest in American Revolutionary War History led me to select The Battle of Germantown as a key feature of the proposed script which narrows the scope of the story. Changes to the story at this juncture can easily be made to satisfy the client. Therefore, not all of these items will be included in the sample script.

Purpose of the film:

1. To introduce visitors to the sights and sounds of historic Cliveden.
2. To foster a better understanding of the significance of the site relative to historic preservation.
3. To demonstrate the effectiveness of a videotape presentation as a promotional device for historic house museums.
4. To educate and inspire visitors to the benefits of documenting their own family history.
5. To help develop an appreciation and respect for things that are “old” in hopes that visitors will collect and protect their personal family histories.
6. To help all Americans to develop a sense of community.

7. To offer insights into the trials and tribulations of an American family spanning seven generations.
8. To explore the methods and relevance of interpreting history through material artifacts.
9. To help promote the site and assist the tour guides in telling the Cliveden and Chew family stories as they relate to American heritage and culture.

Approach to the film:

The approach to the film will be designed as an historical and biographical documentary in style. The house will be the center piece from the time it was built nearly 250 years ago to the present. We will use contemporary footage along with vintage photographs and archival materials. Some recreation of historic events, voices from the past, and computer manipulation may be used in an attempt to connect the past with the present. The film will be approximately 8 to 10 minutes in length and will be guided by a narrator.

Content of the film:

Filming locations, settings and situations will include, but not be limited to:

1. An exploration of the interior and exterior of the house and the property along with the community in which it exists today.

2. Feature only one of the major events associated with the house and family who lived there -- The Battle of Germantown.
3. We will use actors to portray some of the characters who were associated with the house and family.
4. Voices from the past and period music will be used in some situations.
5. Period documents, maps, photographs and artifacts from the collection will be used if possible.
6. Off site elements, such as candle light and wood burning fireplaces will be superimposed in a few sequences.
7. Aerial photography and off site locations will be considered when necessary for other properties relevant to the story.
8. Period footage from other films may be used if appropriate and authorized.
9. "Wild" sound such as water running in a stream, birds chirping, trolleys, horses, rain and battle noise, etc, may be incorporated into the film.

Notes on the Development of the Script.

Title: Selection of a title for this video was made early on in the research process as I reviewed the site, documentation, artifacts and stories revolving around Cliveden and the many interesting characters associated with the mansion. A title should be self evident. Cryptographic titles such as *End of an Era*, while they may sound intriguing, do not give the prospective viewer a sense of the subject matter. They also inhibit an easy search of a textual entry from a written listing of films when looking for a film or video on Cliveden. The “chronicles” tell the prospective viewer that the film may be only a part of a series or the first time sequence about the subject. I employed a subheading of “Chapter 1” to let the reader know that this is not a complete program. There are so many stories available that it was problematic to make a selection of who to feature and what time periods and/or events to concentrate on for a short introductory film. Due to the abbreviated time parameters I chose to feature what I deemed necessary -- the life and times of the most significant historical moments. Unfortunately, decisions must often be made, to avoid politically controversial subjects and explanations or interpretations not easily communicated visually. Even some of the best good stories, due to time limitations will, unfortunately, be excluded.

Key to the success of the film is a good beginning. Within the first few pages of the script the filmmaker must present something which the

viewing audience can relate to. Filmmakers refer to this as the “hook” (as previously noted). The hook captures the imagination, inspiration, sympathy and excites those watching with something both visual and auditory to hold their attention and keep them from tuning out mentally (or changing the channel) so the remainder of the message can be delivered.

Act 1: There is no specific formula for the success of the “hook”. Some films begin slowly, other films start with a fast action sequence. Both have been successful. I elected to begin slowly by establishing the location of the event(s) in Philadelphia during the present time. The tall buildings represented as modern technology and development with a not so subtle glimpse of the devastation brought about by urban renewal on our historic fabric.

Briefly, we are transferred back in time, via the evolution of the wheel, hundreds of years on the eve of the battle of Germantown -- a significant event in the history of Cliveden and the battle for American Independence. We see my interpretation of what the surrounding lands may have looked like and two individuals working in the field, one white (perhaps an indentured servant) and a black man who could have been a free black or more likely a slave. They hear thunder in the distance but the echoing sound comes from the cannons that are launching a great battle.

The following sequence of British soldiers preparing for battle could have been eliminated but I decided to leave it in to clarify the abstract

connection of the audio and visual sequences. This was necessary to provide all members of a diverse audience with a better understanding of the events which are about to take place. Hopefully, the viewers will continue to watch in anticipation of some military action...and an explanation of who is involved, what the results will be and why it happened. This is a male “hook” for those who want to see action.

Act 2: Suddenly, we are transferred forward to another time (1948), a more gentle, serene, atmosphere with a crackling fireplace in the bedroom of an elderly women with period music playing in the background. Elizabeth Brown Chew, better known as Aunt Bessie, is 85 years old, nearly blind, a spinster and current matriarch of Cliveden. Young Sam is her 8 year old grand nephew, who we see looking out the window. He is frightened by the thunder of a passing summer storm. Aunt Bessie reassures Young Sam that all is well and provides comfort for the little boy. Aunt Bessie is the soft, lovable, grandmotherly, female “hook” who most people can relate to and who is our story teller. The cute little boy in the wool socks provides a relationship to the children in the audience, as an expression of innocence, with curiosity and fear of the unknown. Through their eyes we will begin our journey. We never see the faces of Aunt Bessie or the little boy in a close up, only in silhouette and from afar. Point of view (POV) from the actors are used frequently to approximate the feeling

or sense of being there. Young Sam only visits Cliveden on occasion and is fascinated with the unique items displayed in and around the house which is a virtual museum. Aunt Bessie who was born during the Civil War (1863) and lived until 1958 had many memories of Cliveden during her 95 years.

Aunt Bessie embellished her stories with adventure and myth as is often done in oral histories. There may be truth in much of what she says but over time the details may have been modified or obscured. The story sequences that Aunt Bessie relates to Young Sam may be intentionally altered for dramatic effect. Additional, significant, background information crucial to the story are presented by the narrator to emphasize the reality in Aunt Bessie's story. The use of a narrator saves valuable time in a short film and can present verbal explanations to fill in the gaps where a visual sequence is not warranted or in some cases impossible to capture on film. This is not always the best approach but it can be effective in providing additional information (especially in a short version).

Act 3: In the next sequence we are visually transported back to Germantown in 1777 with Chief Justice Benjamin Chew returning to Cliveden from Philadelphia and greeted by his family. His wife and 13 children spent their summers at Cliveden to escape the heat and filth of the city and as sanctuary from periodic epidemics that ravaged the population during this era. This was added to the film to portray Chief Justice Benjamin Chew as a successful landowner, caring father, slave owner --

which was common for the times and the effects of the Revolution on him personally. He was, by far, the most famous member of the Chew family and it is surmised that he helped design the Cliveden mansion. He may have been a Tory sympathizer during the revolution and was in fact placed under house arrest and detained at Union Mills in New Jersey during the British occupation of Philadelphia. Two of his daughters participated in the Mischianza, a gala event staged for the British General Howe shortly before he was recalled to London.

Nancy Richards reported that Benjamin Chew sent his young men and female slaves of child bearing age to his Maryland estates to prevent them from having children who would eventually be freed by the Pennsylvania Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slaves passed in 1780. He inherited several of his mother's 54 slaves willed to him upon her death in 1747 and purchased his manservant in the Caribbean for 75 pounds sterling in 1772. Upon his death in 1810 he had seven free blacks and one slave listed on his inventory. Was he a Tory? and a man who did not recognize the equality of every man? Although, these stories may be true and certainly could make a more exciting and controversial video they were not included. A judgment call on my part, I reasoned that a film designed as an introduction would not benefit what may be considered a negative portrayal of the patriarch of Cliveden and would not advance the promotion of the site. Although, the objective of the filmmaker is to educate and change dull history and to make it more interesting, the introduction of controversial

information may not be in the best interest of the public's perception of our nation's history. No matter how carefully researched and the evidence found in historical records are evaluated, the results are only an interpretation by twentieth century mindsets of 18th century beliefs and attitudes. The challenges to historical accuracy is daunting and are subject to change now and in the future.

The children at the privy were included to demonstrated the lack of modern conveniences. The Chief Justice's carriage, his wife in the garden, and the dining room scenes with servants, were included to portray what it might have been like during this time. Ben's conversation in the den with his eldest son was necessary to show a man in conflict and the effects upon him and his family (and perhaps many others who had difficulty making a pledge of allegiance) during the American Revolution. The quill pen, clay pipe, reed light, and period furnishings will be shown to exhibit some of the artifacts in the Cliveden collection used during the time.

Act 4: The major historical event that may have helped save Cliveden from eventually being torn down, especially in modern times, was the Battle of Germantown -- October 4, 1777. I have chosen a theatrical sequence for this portion of the story. Although there are several accounts of the battle from both British and American sides, the details of what actually took place that morning are open to speculation. The outcome is acknowledged as a victory for the British, as the Americans retreated

from the field of battle. Both sides suffered casualties and many were buried in the vicinity of Cliveden. The battle was hard fought and evidently Washington's attack surprised the British, although, in Alfred C. Lambdin's 1932 researched report of the battle, the attack was expected. The Marquis de Lafayette arrived in the colonies in 1777 and was wounded at the Battle of the Brandywine and although he was not mentioned in this report as a participant in the Battle of Germantown it was tempting to feature this popular character in my film. A number of years later Lafayette returned to Pennsylvania and visited several of the battle sites including Cliveden, which lead to my speculation that he could have been there as an observer. Upon further investigation I found out he was recovering from his wounds in a Harrisburg hospital. But I did find another French officer who did in fact play a part in the drama. I have included this vignette to connect the French with our Revolution and this battle because it was influential in the French decision to form an alliance with the United States which was a key factor, if not the key factor, in subsequent American military victories and the final defeat of the British forces.

General Howe's army and the Hessian mercenaries were in a position to capture and destroy the Continental Army at Germantown, but they did not. We can not second guess Howe's decision to discontinue his advance. But considering his well trained troops and superior force, there remains a question as to his reluctance to follow Washington's panicked troops and continue the battle. I feel that this sequence was important to show the

difficulty of military decisions during that time when communications were problematic at best. The narrator briefly sums up the situation and adds the names of other members of the Chew family that the tour guide will elaborate on during their visit to the mansion.

Young Sam invites the audience to visit Cliveden as he leads us to some of the “secret” places where Aunt Bessie’s stories may be found. Those scenes are of areas not accessible to the public. The narrator concludes with an invitation to visit the Gift Shop and also makes reference to other sites in the area to visit and experience history

Consideration was given to the architectural development of the structure, the fine period furnishings, unique collections of china, textiles, clothing, books and even how the house museum developed through the years. I chose not to present a traditional walking tour of the mansion and grounds on the video. While this information may be important and is an integral part of the story, it does not provide the visual and sensory impact of a video recreation -- and it would take away from the special efforts of the interpreters.

Notes on the Technical Features of the Script:

The following script is my rendition of a short orientation video. It is designed as an introduction for visitors to historic Cliveden to give them an overview of the stories that will be presented to them by the interpreters prior to their indepth walking tour of the site.

To facilitate the visual readability of the script I have purposefully added the technical abbreviations corresponding to camera angles as I envision them. These “directions” are at the discretion of the filmmaker or director and would not normally be included in the script at this stage. Details of the period costumes, room arrangements, period music, speaking accents, diction and vocabulary of the times, as well as deportment are only tangentially noted. The scenes are not numbered at this time due to potential and frequent changes that often occur before the final script is completed.

Primary Abbreviations:

INT -- Interior (location)

MS -- Medium shot

EXT -- Exterior

LS -- Long shot

CU -- Close up

MLS -- Medium long shot

MCU -- Medium close up

XLS -- Extreme long shot

POV -- Point of view: The camera lens views the scene as if it were the eyes of the actor.

OS -- Off screen: The voice of an actor not in view on the screen.

The Cliveden Chronicles -- Chapter One

FADE IN:

Screen black, white letters superimposed title: **The Cliveden Chronicles -- Chapter One.** No sound.

Second title: **A Film by Philip Nord.** FADE IN birds chirping...

EXT. XLS -- Bright sunny day. Trees and river; PAN to Philadelphia skyline with tall modern buildings reaching to the sky, superimposed title: **Philadelphia.** Background noise of the city.

XLS -- Zoom into Germantown area from tall city building vantage point. FADE IN street and car noise.

MS -- Traveling by car from passenger window passing derelict, rundown and abandoned houses. Old historic buildings being demolished, elegant stone facades being destroyed, piles of rubble. Heavy tractor sound, crashing buildings.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

(On car radio giving weather report)

Another beautiful day in Philadelphia...high 76...

MCU -- Modern car tire rolling on asphalt street. As it sounds.

DISSOLVE TO:

MCU -- Old time spoke wheels on a cobblestone street. As it sounds.

DISSOLVE TO:

1. MCU -- Wooden carriage wheel on dirt road. As it sounds with clanking of equipment. Superimpose title: **Germantown October 4, 1777.** 1

MS -- Carriage drivers POV looking at rump of horses in harness pulling carriage. Intensify carriage sound. FADE OUT.

MCU -- Water in stream running over rocks. Trickling water.

WIDE ANGLE -- Stream with forest and adjacent fields. Rushing water.

XLS -- WIDE ANGLE river flowing with heavy fog rolling across open fields. FADE OUT to silence.

LS -- Two men, one black and one white, working in field fixing fence. Thunder claps in the distance. ANGLE ON bare feet.

MS -- Both men stop working, turn around. Black man takes his hat off, wipes his forehead and looks up to sky. Thunder louder with multiple claps.

CU -- (Surprise) Face of black man (slave).

BLACKMAN

Thunder...(hesitates) must be a storm brewin.

CU to MS REVERSE ZOOM on gun carriage wheel to see cannon passing on road. SLOW FADE IN drum cadence beat.

MS -- Line of Red Coat soldiers marching in heavy mist/fog. Marching boots, horses, carriages, equipment clanking and thunder in the near distance.

MCU -- An English flag blowing in the breeze. Suddenly, a marching halt of boots in unison...then silence.

CU -- Face of determined British officer.

BRITISH OFFICER

Heavy British accent...(casual) Ready lads...

CU -- A match lighter is lit and gets close to setting cannon off.

XLS -- Forest. Cannon blast -- like thunder echoes. Screen goes black.

INT. Second floor bedroom at Cliveden.

CU -- Wood fire burning in fireplace REVERSE ZOOM to MS.
Superimpose title: **Cliveden 1948.** Crackling wood fire.

EXT. Looking at second floor window from below. FADE IN Tommy Dorsey big band music on radio. 2

MS -- Small boy looking out of window from camera POV at ground level.

Elderly woman's voice (somewhat sophisticated).

ELDERLY WOMAN (O.S.)

Young Sam -- What's going on out there?

INT. MS -- Silhouetted, elderly woman lying in draped bed propped up on pillows covered with quilts.

YOUNG SAM 3

Sounds like thunder.

MS -- Boy at window looking out.

ELDERLY WOMAN (O.S.)

Yes, we're due for a storm -- but when I hear thunder it reminds me of cannons firing.

CU -- Old woman's hands patting bed.

ELDERLY WOMAN (continued)

Come sit beside me here, but take your shoes off.

MCU -- Boy (puzzled) looks down at his feet.

YOUNG SAM

Giggles.

CU -- Boy's POV looking down at his wool socks (shoes already off).

YOUNG SAM

(hesitant)...OK...

MS -- Little boy climbs into chair positioned next to elderly woman in bed. She places her hand on the boys arm to comfort him.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Are you afraid?

YOUNG SAM

(pouting) I don't like thunder.

ELDERLY WOMAN

You'll be all right...I will protect you.

MCU -- From boy's POV lying on bed looking around the room full of antiques and period furniture.

YOUNG SAM

(quizzical) Aunt Bessie?

AUNT BESSIE (change from Elderly woman) 4

(slowly) Yes.

YOUNG SAM

What's so special about this big old house?

MCU -- A bedside table with a book and heavy bifocal reading glasses on top and a radio alongside. Radio -- Music FADE OUT. 5

AUNT BESSIE

(thinking) Well lets see...Do you like to read books?

YOUNG SAM

I like it when my teacher reads us stories.

MCU -- Scan of bookcase filled with books.

AUNT BESSIE

Well, Cliveden is like a history book filled with exciting stories about real people, about our family, and others who helped shape our country.

MS -- Boy picks up the book on the bedside table and puts on glasses and pretends to read. We see a mop of hair over the opened book.

CU -- RACK focus in and out on text.

YOUNG SAM (O.S.)

How do you see with these things?

AUNT BESSIE (O.S.)

If I didn't have them I could not see anything. 6

CU -- Scan family photos in frames on dressing table.

YOUNG SAM

Do your stories have good guys and bad guys?

AUNT BESSIE

You bet...and good times and some not so good.

YOUNG SAM

Do they have happy endings?

AUNT BESSIE

The final chapters haven't been written yet but I believe they will end on a happy note.

YOUNG SAM

Where are the stories? Can I see them?

AUNT BESSIE

Oh, they're all over the house. You might find them on the old sofa downstairs, out in the garden by that big tree, hidden in the attic and in the basement too.

YOUNG SAM

Are they scary?

AUNT BESSIE

No, they are wonderful.

YOUNG SAM

How can I find them?

AUNT BESSIE

(mysterious) You have to look real hard and listen quietly to the wind in the trees and the songs of the birds...

YOUNG SAM

But it's too noisy out side.

AUNT BESSIE

The best story tellers are ancient people...like me with lots of memories of how it once was...long, long ago. 7

CU -- Photo of Aunt Bessie in frame on table.

YOUNG SAM

Would you tell me a story?

CU -- Little doll, antique toys or child's shoes, dress or bonnet.

AUNT BESSIE

Certainly, (pause) how about I tell you some of the stories about Cliveden I heard when I was a little girl?

YOUNG SAM

(excited) Yea!

NARRATOR

Aunt Bessie is no longer with us now but the stories she remembered have some truth in them. Many of these stories are with us today left behind in the architecture, artifacts and heirlooms that her family collected over the centuries. 8 The stories you are about to hear are based on many original documents, donated by the Chew family, archaeological evidence found in and around the mansion and various scholarly publications of related historic events. Archivists, architectural historians, curators and historic preservationists continue their search for clues to discovering the secrets of Cliveden and the Chew family.

EXT: LS -- In the distance we see an elegant horse drawn carriage, driven by a well dressed black man, trotting down a country road. Mid morning on a spring day. Superimpose title: **Germantown 1777.**

MS -- A wooden door to an outhouse with three children outside waiting impatiently.

CHILDREN

(excited) Hurry up!

CHILD IN outhouse (O.S.)

(irritated) from inside Hold your horses!

MS -- The door opens and a small female child comes out of the privy and is straightening her dress. She is greeted by another older girl who helps her.

OLDER GIRL

(excited) Hurry, I think father is here. 9

MS -- They run off together.

MS -- From a second floor open window (the same one we saw earlier at the back of the house) a black woman appears and is calling out.

BLACK SERVANT

Mrs. Chew...Mister Chew is comin' up the road.

MS to CU -- Looking down from the window a white woman with flowing skirt out in the formal English garden. We see her face as she turns around with a big smile, checks and adjusts her dress, and quickly leaves toward the house.

MCU -- Face of man riding in carriage. Superimpose title: **Chief Justice Benjamin Chew.** 10

MS -- A large mansion (Cliveden) with several servants standing at the door and lots of children running towards the carriage. They greet him as one of the servants opens the carriage door. 11 Smiling faces of his children as he greets the little ones. He embraces his wife with a hug and he pats an older son on the shoulder entering the front door of the mansion as several servants bow. 12

MS -- Next we scan an elegant formal dining room table set with silver and Canton china plates featuring many gourmet delicacies while a servant brings in a platter of poultry from the kitchen. Benjamin, his wife and other guests sit around the table in quiet conversation as they are served their meals. FADE OUT on candles burnt down reflected in mirror.

INT. In the office, later that evening.

CU -- A match is lit to light a clay pipe.

OLDER SON ¹³

What's wrong father?

MCU -- Ben puffing on the pipe.

BEN

(coughs) What do you mean?

OLDER SON

(fascinated) I've never seen you smoke before.

MS -- A servant enters with two filled brandy glasses on a silver platter. Ben takes one and offers the other one to his (astonished) son. Ben motions to excuse the servant and sips from the glass savoring the aroma.

BEN

(nobly) I am in fear for my family and the estates.

OLDER SON

Are you ill father?

BEN

No, I am in good health but sick in spirit...It's this revolution that is causing me pain.

OLDER SON

(Aggressive) But I've heard that the British soldiers have defeated General Washington's army and the war will soon be over.

BEN

Therein lies the problem my son. The revolutionary council believes that General Cornwallis will soon occupy Philadelphia and anyone they deem sympathetic to his majesty, King George (raising his glass as in a toast) is to be rounded up and detained...I have been ordered, along with governor John Penn, to be placed under house arrest and taken away to an undisclosed location...for my own safety they told me. I have been given a few days on my word and reputation to set my house in order before reporting to the authorities. 14

OLDER SON

(excited) How can they do that? What are we to do? Where do we go?

BEN

I have protested but to no avail -- members of the council are in no mood to listen to anyone right now. I have sent messengers to our properties in Maryland and Delaware instructing them to lie low. I have no desire to provoke the ill will of any military or civilian authority.

OLDER SON

How can I help?

MCU -- Ben is now seated at his desk writing with a quill pen by the light of a reed light.

BEN

I want you to help your mother close up Cliveden and move with the children into the city where I believe you will be safe from marauding soldiers or deserters from the army who may pillage the countryside. (ANGLE ON city townhouse and old map of Philadelphia during occupation). If the British army occupies the city they will protect those subjects that appear to be loyal to the crown. Take this note which should give you free passage into town ...15

We still have a few friends and I have arranged to have the family taken care of financially during my absence.

NARRATOR

On September 26, Major General Charles Lord Cornwallis and thousands of British and Hessian mercenary troops marched into Philadelphia. Huge crowds of mostly women, children and Quakers lined the streets and shouted with joy. 16 British General Howe was assigned to protect the northern approach to the city.

EXT: MS -- Early morning dense fog. Several groups of Continental soldiers marching along a road. Superimpose title: **October 4, 1777.** General Washington on horseback with several aides in elegant uniforms also on horseback situated on a rise in a field surrounded by trees. A cannon carriage goes past. We hear gunfire. An un-uniformed soldier comes riding up to the general.

SOLDIER

(excited) General, sir, we have made contact with the enemy...about 200 yards up the road.

WASHINGTON

(cautious) Settle down...Report what you saw.

SOLDIER

The British forward pickets have been overrun and they have fallen back to the position of their advanced guard units...they were totally surprised.

WASHINGTON

(motioning to aide) Very well. Have the men advance.

An Aide rides to the marching soldiers on the road and draws his sword.

AIDE

(shouting orders) Forward at a quickstep. Men, we have them on the run.

The soldiers begin to run toward the battle.

MS -- At the British camp, tents, campfires burning, all around Chew's house. A British officer seated at the front of a tent in an elegant uniform quietly speaking to others. Superimpose title: **Colonel Thomas Musgrave, 40th Regiment.** 17 We hear musket fire. Musgrave looks up and rises to his feet. A soldier come running up to him.

BRITISH SOLDIER

(out of breath) Enemy soldiers advancing...

MUSGRAVE

(to a nearby aide) Rally the men...

MLS -- Orders being yelled, Form Up! -- a drummer starts beating. Musket fire increases. Another soldier from the front guard reports to Musgrave as a cannon ball explodes close by.

SOLDIER 2

They have overrun the guard posts!

LS -- Soldiers from the British front guard are running in retreat from the oncoming Americans. Musgrave is astonished to see the panicked red coats running back towards the camp in a disorderly fashion.

MUSGRAVE

(he yells) Halt! Hold your positions, form up!
First Sergeant!

MS -- Soldiers scrambling out of their tents trying to button their uniforms and pull on their boots, grabbing their rifles. Another cannon explosion nearby. First Sergeant arrives.

FIRST SERGEANT (to Musgrave)

(firm) Yes, sir!

MUSGRAVE

(calmly) I believe we have a problem here. Send a messenger to General Howe and advise him of our situation... Get some men and follow me. 18

ANGLE ON -- MS firing all around, confusion. A group of British soldiers enter through the front door of the Cliveden mansion.

WIDE ANGLE -- Stenton, General Howe's headquarters. We hear cannon and musket fire in the distance. British and Hessian soldiers forming into lines. Officers and aides by the general's side. Drums beating. Superimpose title: **Stenton, General Howe's Headquarters. (About a mile away)**

GENERAL HOWE 19

(Giving orders to troops, echoed by other officers)

Prepare to advance at the run.

MS -- A messenger arrives on horseback and addresses the general.

MESSENGER

Sir, Report from Colonel Musgrave. The rebels are attacking in force!

GENERAL HOWE

(calmly) How many? From Where?

MESSENGER

I don't know their numbers. They are advancing down the great road from the west and have overrun the camp and our army is in retreat.

ANGLE ON -- MCU General Howe's perplexed facial expression.

MS -- General Howe is writing a message and calmly hands it to the messenger.

GENERAL HOWE

Proceed to Philadelphia and give this dispatch to General Cornwallis at the command center and return with an answer.

The messenger accepts the note, turns and rides off. Howe turns to his Hessian adjutant and speaks. 20

GENERAL HOWE (continued)

I am requesting reinforcements...just in case this is a ruse. (pause) We knew they were up to something... Now it's time to catch that fox, Washington and his band of hooligans, and finish this business. (motions to another aide) Bring my horse around.

MS -- He climbs aboard his horse.

GENERAL HOWE (continued)

(confident) Show the colors and sound the pipes, we want them to know we are coming. Bag pipes begin playing.

MLS -- Kilted English soldiers marching with bagpipes and flags waving. Hessian soldiers forming up. We hear commands being given in German.

ANGLE ON -- Multiple sequences. The raging battle. British and Colonial troops engaged in heavy battle. Soldiers shooting out the windows of Cliveden. Dead soldiers around front door area. General Washington and General Knox watching assault.

GENERAL WASHINGTON (to Knox)

Have a detachment surround the house and continue the advance.

GENERAL KNOX

No general, I advise against leaving a fortified position in our rear. We must take this position at all cost. We could be trapped should we need to retreat. 21

GENERAL WASHINGTON

(contemplating) Where are the others?

MS -- A Continental officer rides up and reports to Washington.

OFFICER

Sir, our flanks are completely exposed and there is no sign of the General Greene or the others. I think they must have gotten lost in this blasted fog.

WIDE ANGLE -- AERIAL shot of battle on the ground. British advancing in columns marching down the road, fog and smoke shrouded. Bag pipes playing.

MS -- Washington and aides from hill vantage point watching the battle.

CU -- Washington's face.

WASHINGTON

God help us if the others don't show up.

ANGLE ON continued fighting. A shower of bullets strikes the trees around which they are standing and suddenly, an officer standing next to him is hit and several others come to his rescue.

MS -- A French Officer elegantly dressed in his uniform on a beautiful horse with two aides behind him addresses Washington.

FRENCH OFFICER 22

General, I beg you please to move, it is too dangerous here.

MLS -- The general and his aides turn to ride away and seek safer ground.

WIDE ANGLE -- British and Hessian troops coming across a field in mass formation. Flags flying, bag pipes playing and drums beating.

WASHINGTON

(frustrated) Sound recall.

CU -- Drums beat the order.

MS -- Confused Colonial soldiers begin to run in retreat... almost panic.

WASHINGTON

(to aide) Make sure we have a rear guard. Howe may want to follow us.

DISSOLVE TO:

MLS -- The Colonial Army in retreat returning along a country road. Wounded soldiers in wagons.

MCU -- A rider comes up to Washington and several others alongside the road watching the wounded pass by.

RIDER

General. The enemy has stopped, they are not advancing.

WASHINGTON

(to French Officer) My hope is that we have stung him.

FRENCH OFFICER

(Heavy accent) I think General Howe enjoys too much the hospitality of Philadelphia.

DISSOLVE TO:

MS -- General Howe on horseback with troops marching by. Speaking to Hessian General and other aides. We hear some musket fire in the distance.

GENERAL HOWE

Sound recall. Stop the advance.

HESSIAN OFFICER ²³

(quickly) But general, they have no heart for battle. Let my troops finish them. (Heavy German accent)

GENERAL HOWE

No, let them go. I will meet Washington face to face on an open field one day soon and we will see who will be victorious. FADE OUT.

MS -- Aunt Bessie and Young Sam are fast asleep.

MS -- Multiple DISSOLVES of three flags waving: British, French and finally American.

NARRATOR

The battle was a loss for the Continental army but was a gallant and daring attempt by Washington's raw recruits to challenge the powerful British army. It helped convince the French of the courage, dedication and resolve of the Continental army and prompted their alliance with the Americans. Today you can still see the battle scars on the walls of Cliveden and walk the sacred ground where some of the soldiers who perished that day are buried. ²⁴

DISSOLVE TO:

MS -- Facade of Cliveden. Superimpose title: **Cliveden Today.**

NARRATOR (continued)

The Revolution and the stories of Cliveden did not end with the Battle of Germantown. General Washington and his troops spent the winter at Valley Forge.

MS -- Valley Forge huts and cannon.

General Howe never met Washington for he was recalled to London. The British would abandoned Philadelphia within the year.

MCU -- Cannon barrel explosion.

But the war continued for several more years. ²⁵ Benjamin Chew was released and chose to sit out the remainder of the war in Delaware. He sold Cliveden in 1779, later returned to Philadelphia, slowly regained his prominence in the judicial courts of Philadelphia, and repurchased Cliveden in 1797.

MS -- Facade of Independence Hall front entrance.

The Chew family continued to use Cliveden as a residence throughout the 19th and 20th centuries gradually updating and adding new features.

INT -- MS Kitchen and bathrooms at Cliveden.

CU -- Multiple shots of character portraits: Bad Ben, Centennial Sam, Anne Sophia Penn, and Aunt Bessie.

Lesser known but equally important are the stories surrounding other members of the Chew family such as Bad Ben ²⁶, a troubled member of the family who attempted to take over the estate; Centennial Sam ²⁷, who recognized the importance of Cliveden and actively participated in promoting it as a symbol of the 18th century and the battle for American independence. The ladies of the house, Anne ²⁸ and Bessie, the spinsters who fought to maintain the household during many trials and tribulations. Adding to this group, were the servants, slaves, craftsmen and soldiers who contributed their service, talents and even their lives to Cliveden.

The preservation of Cliveden, like other significant historic house museums, provides only a brief glimpse of the past. It offers an opportunity to connect with those who have gone before us -- those who helped develop our nation. The story of Cliveden and the Chew Family is not about the rich and powerful, it is about survival -- through the good times and the bad. It is about family -- meeting the challenges and overcoming the obstacles and conflicts of everyday life. It is a reminder to help us define and refine who we are as individuals and as a people and where we want to go in the future. There are some who will find fault and criticize the Chew's lifestyle but many will find a common bond -- that which makes us uniquely American. What we, as a people, do with this knowledge will shape the future of our children.

MCU -- Little feet walking up attic stairs.

POV of boy looking at old trunks in attic.

YOUNG SAM (O.S.)

Hi, my name is Sam. I would like you to visit the big house at Cliveden. See if you can find some of the great stories she told me about this place. It's a neat place, lots of stuff and good "hidden" places.

MCU -- Boy looking through the "jail room" (the slatted door to a storage area) and the third floor stairs to nowhere (a sealed roof entrance).

CU -- Superimposed title: **Welcome to Cliveden.**

MS -- Multiple shots of grounds and buildings.

NARRATOR

There are so many stories to tell covering seven generations of characters and historic events. If you have a special interest in Georgian architecture, period furnishings, ceramics, textiles, military history or a specific time period please inform your guide who will be happy to answer your questions. A number of publications in the gift shop can provide you with more details and references for in-depth study as well as information about other sites to visit in the area.

FADE OUT

Notes on the Cliveden Chronicles...Script

1. Thomas J McGuire, *The Surprise at Germantown -- October 4th, 1777* (Gettysburg: Thomas Publications, 1994) title page. Date of the Battle of Germantown.
2. Nancy E. Richards, Chief Researcher *Cliveden -- The Chew Mansion in Germantown* (A report designed to chart the social history of Cliveden as a companion to the HSR -- dated Nov. 1993) Xeroxed copy purchased at Cliveden, p. 115. "...she spent her evenings reading or listening to the radio."
3. Samuel Chew, Jr. was born in 1942. (Chew Family Genealogical Chart purchased at Cliveden, hereafter "Chart").
4. Elizabeth Brown Chew, "generally signed her letters to family members using her nickname -- Bessie". (Richards, p.111) She supervised the property, from 1927 until 1958. (Richards, p. 54)
5. "She listened to the radio and read a great deal, until her eyesight failed." (Richards, p. 116)
6. "By 1953, ninety year-old Bessie was nearly blind." (Richards, p. 117)
7. "Bessie reminisced and retold the family stories." (Richards, p. 117)
8. "200 thousand documents comprise the Chew Family papers..." (Historic Preservation Magazine Nov/Dec 1993 Reprint)
9. They had 14 children, 12 girls and 2 boys. One boy and one girl died prior to 1777 and one girl was born in 1779. Nine children were at home (in 1777) from ages 2 to 27 and the two oldest daughters were married. (Richards, p. 13)
10. Chief Justice Benjamin Chew was born in 1722 and died in 1810. (Chart)
11. "His household included both indentured servants and slaves." (Richards, p. 13)
12. Elizabeth Oswald was born in 1734 and died in 1819. (Richards, p. 2)
13. Benjamin Chew, Jr. was born in 1758 and died in 1844. (Chart)
14. The executive Council of the new government issued a warrant for his arrest on grounds of protecting public safety. Chew demanded by what authority and for what cause -- he believed it was an infringement on his rights as a free man. Chew and Governor John Penn were confined at Union Forge in New Jersey.
15. Elizabeth Oswald moved the family to their house in Philadelphia on South Third Street and hob-nobbed with the British officers and tory sympathizers. (Richards, p. 19)
16. James Thatcher, M.D., *Military Journal of the American Revolution* (New York: Corner House Historical Publications, 1998) p. 117. Quakers applauding Cornwallis entering Philadelphia.

17. The British 40th Regiment of Foot, commanded by Lieutenant Colonial Musgrave, was stationed behind Benjamin Chew's county seat -- Cliveden. (McGuire, p. 16)
18. "Musgrave ordered part of the regiment into Cliveden." (McGuire, p. 49)
19. General Sir William Howe, the British Commander in Chief...(McGuire, p. 10)
20. Captain Friedrich von Munchhausen...delivering a message to Lord Cornwallis near Philadelphia. (McGuire, p. 39)
21. General Knox advised Washington that it was "unwise to leave a fortified castle" in the rear. (McGuire, p. 61)
22. Thomas Antoine du Plessis - Mauduit. (McGuire p. 73)
23. General Wilhelm von Knyphausen. (McGuire, p. 87)
24. Thirty bodies were buried in a pit Northwest of Cliveden. (McGuire, p. 87)
25. The Revolutionary War officially ended in 1783 with the signing of the Treaty of Paris.
26. Bad Ben or Benjamin Chew III, born 1793, died 1864. (Chart)
27. Centennial Sam or Samuel Chew III, born 1832, died 1887. (Chart)
28. Anne Sophia Penn, born 1805 and died 1892. (Chart)

Conclusion

The paucity of high-quality, accurate and entertaining video productions related to general preservation and house museums is regrettable. There are a variety of understandable reasons for this situation, primarily prohibitive production costs and inevitable obsolescence due to new research. Yet, it is imperative that the preservation community “sell” its story to the public in order to be a successful entity. Academicians may criticize the entertainment aspect of some historic commercial ventures but without such projects, public support for scholarly research activities will be limited. Federal funds for historic and preservation activities have always been the stepchild of fickle politicians and may soon come to an end. Scholarly endeavors, while admirable and necessary, are often not exciting for the general public. Conversely, without the popularization of our history, the study and documentation of American Cultural development will be diminished. The “melting pot” may be a myth but history provides a common identity for our country’s diverse people and an appreciation for the value of living as an American. The influential visual media of video and television, giving the people a sense of place are important components that tie our United States together. A short preservation video will solve neither social ills nor discrimination but it has the potential to help educate all Americans to protect and save our heritage.

A key, though latent, factor during my research and development of this project was the question of whether an experienced filmmaker with

formal training in historic preservation could make a better film than someone with only a rudimentary understanding of these subjects. My initial response to this question was yes. Could a wheelchair-bound filmmaker make as great a film about sports, if he never experienced playing the game? Could a non-alcohol drinking filmmaker make as compelling a film about wine, if he never tasted it? Could an historically trained filmmaker make a grand film about math or science or music, if he did not have any training in the subject? Could a great film script by an historically trained writer be converted into a great film by a filmmaker with no historical training?

Some filmmakers believe that the ultimate success or failure of a film must be based on the audience's reaction to the message being delivered. While a lucrative box office result, especially with feature films, is worthy of note, there are other films which are considered by viewers and film critics to be extraordinarily "good" even if they produce no monetary windfall. Of course, a short introductory film designed for a house museum is a special case with a limited audience. But the fact remains, that a well documented, written and produced film should communicate and deliver the message regardless of subject matter.

I finally concluded that what separates the historically trained filmmaker from other kinds of filmmakers is knowledge, background and a deep understanding of the topic he is filming. In theory, he knows his subject and is not merely the technician to convert another's story into film.

It is not a given that the historically trained filmmaker's product will be more lucid, compelling or memorable. The filmmaker, assuming he has (1) some experience and knows what he is doing, combined with (2) special training in historic preservation principles, should increase the chances of creating a superior video production. I am confident that my ability to capture the essence of Cliveden's past is more effectively passed on to the viewers because of my knowledge of historic preservation. My hope and desire is that *Scripting History* and the resulting script on Cliveden will be a positive vehicle for promoting the preservation of our nation's historic fabric.

A number of people have read the proposed script for *Cliveden Chronicles -- Chapter 1*. Their responses to the script elicited questions and comments about the Chew Family and the historical events surrounding Cliveden -- even though they have not seen the film. While this sampling can not be considered research data, or evidence of the effectiveness of the film or its message, the sampling does exactly what I intended -- it encourages the viewer to seek more information. The rest is up to the interpreter when they bring the history alive for the visitor during the walking tour of the site.

Appendix I

The Battle of Germantown

British Lt. General Sir William Howe was setting up his defensive positions in and around Philadelphia after entering the city unopposed on the 26th of September. His army of 15,000 troops had pushed General Washington's forces steadily backwards with the only real opposition being at Brandywine. Howe now split his force and sent part down to destroy the American forts on the Delaware River.

Washington decided to take advantage of this situation and moved his 11,000 man army from Pennypacker's Mill (near Schwenksville) east to the Peter Wentz Farmstead on October 2nd, 1777. The plan for the battle featured a four prong simultaneous attack along the British defense line. The four distances varied and the roads were not all well understood.

On the 3rd of October two days rations were cooked and each man was ordered to draw 40 rounds of ammunition. For easy recognition in the dark, everyone put a piece of white paper on their hat. The plan called for starting the march at six in the evening and to be two miles from the British outposts by two in the morning. At 5 am, the pickets were to be charged with bayonets only -- to avoid warning the camp.

A heavy fog settled over the area during the early hours hindering progress and visibility. General Sullivan's column attacked the pickets on Germantown Road, but they managed to fire the alarm cannons before falling back. The British 40th Light Infantry Regiment, encamped near the

Benjamin Chew mansion called “Cliveden,” took refuge inside. About 120 officers and men barricaded the windows and doors of the large stone house and put up a solid defense. Rather than bypass this tiny pocket of resistance, the unfortunate decision was made by Washington to capture this building. They brought up the cannon and the advance of the American middle was delayed. Meanwhile, Sullivan and Wayne were slowly overpowering the redcoat flank in the heavy fog. Greene’s column arrived a half hour late because of a longer route. They attacked the British right with vigor, but one of his officers, General Stephen, was drunk and heard Wayne’s men fighting furiously to the south. Assuming the firing to be a British advance, without orders or letting Greene know he was leaving, Stephen took his troops and, in the fog, attacked Wayne’s troops from behind. Wayne thought he was being surrounded and started a slow but steady retreat. Stephen’s troops heard the cannons at the Chew mansion and thought they were cut off so they also retreated. (Stephen was later courtmartialed and thrown out of the army.) The forth column got lost and never reached the fray.

The Americans were also running out of ammunition. The armies were so close in the fog that when some Continentals started to ask for more cartridges the British overheard them and realized their sudden advantage. General Cornwallis and fresh reinforcements arrived from Philadelphia. By 10 am the American line was in full retreat, back past the Chew mansion still in British hands. The retreat carried them all the way

back to Pennypacker's Mills. Some of the troops had marched 40 miles, fought a four hour battle -- and had no chance to eat and little to drink since the day before.

The near loss showed Howe that he could not spare any troops to aid Burgoyne at Saratoga, and proved to France that the American Troops were perhaps getting good enough to win. The defeat of Burgoyne soon after convinced the French to openly support the United States.

References to the Battle of Germantown

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Appendix II

Epilogue to the Battle of Germantown

What really happened at the Battle of Germantown on that foggy morning of October 4th, 1777 will continue to be debated. In McGuire's book, *The Surprise at Germantown*, he quotes many sources from American, British, Hessian and local residents that describe their experience before, during and after the battle. Some of the letters and books written several years later by the participants contradicted each other and some supported varied versions of the conflict. In the heat of battle and resulting confusion caused by smoke and fog, it is possible many people interpreted what they saw from different perspectives. Two people experiencing the same situation can have divergent conclusions. Therefore, we must question the written record and try to ferret out the truth as best we can. This forces the filmmaker to grapple with the issue of artistic license verse historical accuracy. It requires the filmmaker, out of necessity, to fill in the blanks in order to produce a coherent story. Unfortunately, some of the "facts" in this story are based on secondary information. We know that the Battle of Germantown was real, we know many of the key players in the drama, and we know the result but we do not know all the details. Those details are key elements necessary to produce a good story and an historical narrative the audience can relate to.

Appendix III

Film verse Video

Although the terms *film* and *video*, are often, used interchangeably, they are not the same. Both film and video are involved in the capture of moving picture images (in a non related process) and ultimately achieve nearly the same results when viewed.

Motion picture film is a continuous strip of single photographs made with a sensitive emulsion that must be exposed to light and developed with chemicals to produce an image. Generally, the sound is made by using a magnetic tape transferred to an optical strip and incorporated into the film involving an additional process with specialized equipment. The entire process requires sophisticated and expensive equipment and specially trained technicians to develop the negative, edit, and produce the final results. Special equipment (ie. projector and screen) are required to show it to an audience.

Video images and sound are both transferred electronically to a magnetic tape. These images can be played back almost instantly and viewed or edited with the same relatively inexpensive equipment used by an individual with no formal training. In most cases, the videotape can be immediately placed in a VCR (video cassette recorder) connected to a television monitor and played. Copies of the videotape can be reproduced for a few dollars and shared with others. Without elaborating on the

choices of professional and more expensive video formats (such as digital), special effects and high end presentation equipment, there is no comparison to the superiority and convenience of videotape over motion picture film production in time and expense. Quality of the picture image can be argued in favor of film but recent improvements of videotape image sharpness and the use of the camcorder by some professional filmmakers proves that videotape production is here to stay. Today, nearly all television production is accomplished using electronic imaging.

Production costs involving actors, costumes, location shooting and special effects add considerably to the cost. Because of its convenience and savings, videotape is my first choice for making a film presentation to orient visitors to an historic house museum.

Appendix IV

Film Budget Sample

Below are the major items that appear in most film and video budgets:

A. Research

1. Script research, including travel and hotels
2. General preproduction expenses, including travel, meetings, etc.

B. Shooting

1. *Crew*

- Cameraperson
- Assistant cameraperson
- Soundperson
- Lighting technician
- Production assistant
- Driver and/or grip
- Production manager

2. *Equipment*

- Camera and usual accessories
- Special camera equipment such as fast lenses
- Tape recorders and microphones
- Lighting

3. *Location Expenses*

- Vehicle rental
- Gasoline
- Crew Food
- Hotels
- Air fares

4. *Stock*

- Negative film
- Developing film and making work print
- Reels of quarter-inch tape
- Magnetic tape, including quarter-inch transfer
- Leader and spacing

C. Postproduction

1. *Editing*

- Editor
- Assistant editor
- Sound editor
- Editing room and equipment, including video off-line

2. Lab and Other Expenses

- Sound coding
- Music and sound transfers
- Opticals and special effects
- Video window dubs
- Making titles
- Narration recording
- Sound mix
- Negative cutting
- Making optical negative
- First and second answer print
- Release print
- On-line video editing

3. General

- Office expenses, rent, telephone, faxes, photocopying, etc.
- Transcripts
- Music and archive royalties
- Insurance
- Legal costs
- Dispatch and customs clearance
- Advertising and publicity
- Messengers

4. Personnel

- Writer
- Director
- Producer
- Narrator
- Associate producer
- Researcher
- General assistant

D. Company Provisions

1. Contingency
2. Company profit

Ninety percent of the above items occur in most films. The other 10 percent depends on the size and finances of the production.

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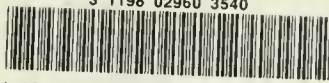
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